



Appleby Archaeology

Tenth Anniversary Issue



Volume 11 Issue 1: Spring 2008

Editorial : Tenth Birthday Celebrations

As many of you will doubtless know, Appleby Archaeology celebrated its Tenth Birthday at January's AGM and Members' evening. And to mark the event, we thought we'd produce a special double-weight, colour newsletter. I hope you like it. Please try not to get too used to colour archaeology though. You'll be back to traditional slim-line black-and white next time.

It was great to see so many members at the party. Naturally we had a cake – but not just any old cake. This was a special archaeological cake, complete with Appleby Archaeology logo in artistic Celtic knot work. Even better, it was a chocolate cake exhibiting several interesting layers when seen in cross-section. There was even a glass of "champagne" so that Richard



That cake!

could propose a toast to "the next ten years".

Sadly, of course, many of us have stopped celebrating our



"The next ten years"

own birthdays, but I think we can agree that a Tenth Birthday is rather different. At ten you're old enough to start to appreciate what it's all about but still young enough to have a keen anticipation for what lies ahead.

In this vein, Harry now entertained us with a potted history of the origins of the society and its most significant achievements. I think it's fair to say that we were surprised ourselves when reminded of just how much we have done.

Harry had managed to collect together a fine set of photographs taken over the years and everybody enjoyed seeing how young and slim they looked. Phyllis then took over and told us about her recent visit to the Isle of Arran where she had encountered some quite spec-

tacular megaliths and stone circles

Accounts of these talks, together with a selection of their slides, can be found overleaf.

Also in this issue, you will find accounts of last year's talk on the Threlkeld quarry and the more



Phyllis with that cake again recent lecture on Viking place names.

Finally, at the end, there are details of this year's planned summer outings and, tucked somewhere inside, a booking form for the trip to Vindolanda. You should try to get this in the post quickly as, after Andrew Birley's splendid talk last year, it's bound to be popular.

Here's to the next ten years!

Martin Joyce

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Phyllis on Arran

The isle of Arran, which lies in the Firth of Clyde, is sometimes referred to as "Scotland in Miniature" as the rocks and landforms mimic the rest of Scotland. Ancient metamorphic rocks, some 800 million years old, and intrusive granites form the higher ground of the north and younger, 250-340 million year old, sedimentary rocks underlie the gentler agricultural land of the south. The island is rich in archaeology and on every walk there was something of interest from Neolithic chamber tombs to medieval castles.

I want to concentrate on the Neolithic monuments on Machrie Moor which lies on the west side of the island. It is a spectacular location, where a bleak moor is encircled by a ring of, often snow-covered, mountains. The moor is notable for the number and variety of monuments which are representative of

most aspects of prehistoric life and include chambered tombs, cairns and hut circles as well as a group of six stone circles lying within an area of 400 square metres.



Megalith on Machrie Moor

Each circle appears different prompting Dr Aubrey Burl to describe the complex as "the best group of architecturally varied stone circles in western Europe". Two circles combine two types of stone, red sandstone and granite boulders and

four are composed of either granite or sandstone, the rocks chosen being of contrasting textures and colours. Five of the six circles were first described in 1832 but it was not until the site was stripped of peat during Dr Aubrey Burl's investigations in 1978 that the presence of the sixth was confirmed. In 1985-86 there was further excavation and the findings from both these investigations provided a chronology of the activities on the moor from 3000BC

The earliest features were pits and gullies, some containing pottery which could be dated to about 3000BC. Around 2100BC timber circles were erected. Hazel and oak fragments and pottery found in the post holes of the timbers enabled these monuments to be dated. There then seemed to be a period of time when the area was used for agriculture. There was extensive evidence of ploughing, and analysis indicated that the crops were of barley type grasses and that the land had been manured using seaweed. It is difficult to date the building of the stone circles but

it is thought they were erected around 1750BC. Two circles were fully excavated. One was made up of eleven stones of



which six were granite and five smaller sandstones. The second had ten stones, nine sandstone and one granite boulder. Sometime later cremated remains were buried within the circles and, associated with these burials, the archaeologists found pottery shards of a cordoned urn, bone pins, burned flints and human teeth. These features and the existence of similar sites and artefacts in neighbouring areas suggested a date of 1450-1250BC. After the stone circles fell into disuse and before peat began to form over the sites, there would appear to have been another phase of farming activity, but dating by pollen analysis was impossible

due to contaminants passing through the dry cracked peat.

To con-

clude I would like to move forward in time to the Iron Age and the dramatic fort on Drumadoon Point. Doon Fort, once bounded by a wall on the landward side occupies an area of 5 hectares on a commanding headland. Forts of similar size, surrounded by a single wall, occur



sporadically in the coastlands

Phyllis Rouston



*Iron Age
fort on
Drumadoon
Point*

Ten Years of A...

Martin Railton had the idea of forming a group in 1996. Meetings were initially held in the Sixth Form Centre of the school and then moved to the school hall. In 2000 the hall was changed to the Supper Room. From that time the group has met there. The group has now reached its tenth anniversary and there are now over sixty members.

Membership participation and, in particular, involvement in fieldwork has been a strong feature of the group. Martin gave a series of lectures and instruction in fieldwork and the group has undertaken a number of surveys. The first survey that involved members recording any features they found was in 1997. This was followed by a survey in 1998, which was the year of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease but, as a result of the survey, the group was able to identify a number of features. The area of interest was surveyed and recorded over the next few years. The survey was completed in 2000. The excavation was not obtained. It is now hoped that a new survey will be undertaken over the next few years.

The group has also always aimed to encompass a broad range of subjects. The subjects have included subjects from all periods, from prehistory to secon

the group has heard of excavations as far afield as Orkney and the Shetlands. In 2000 the group found members exploring sites such as Thornburgh Castle, the castle of the Daughters of the King, Whitley Castle and Nenthead Lead Mine.

The group has run two very successful conferences, the first in 2000 and the second in 2007 on the theme of *People and the Land*. A visit from Time Team took place in 2007. The group also visited the Market Hall, organised by the group, to mark National Archaeology Day.

In conclusion I would claim that, over the ten years, the group has shown that the next ten years that confirm this.

Harry Hawkins



Appleby Archaeology

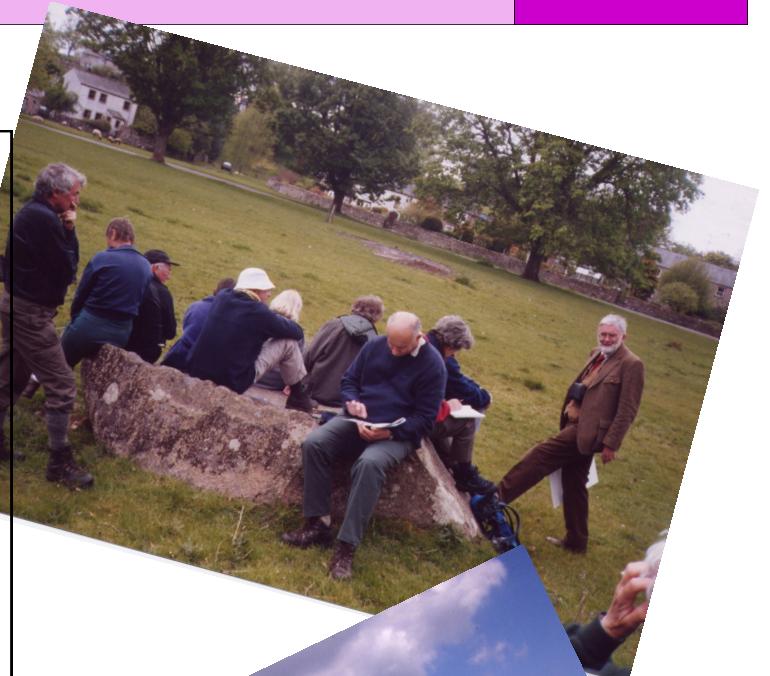
but it wasn't until 1997 that it became fully established. It started at Appleby Grammar School but in 2002 the regular venue has flourished and it now has a membership of around 40.

Participation in fieldwork has always been important. Early on, the group developed its own fieldwork techniques and in 2000 the group started a landscape survey of the area around Appleby. This was curtailed in 2001 by the lack of funding available for the work done, a project at Kirklands started in 2002. The group has had to wait the next three years but regrettably permission for a small excavation on the site of a Roman fort on Brackenber Moor will involve the members in a new project.

The group has a wide and varied range of archaeological interests. The talks have included topics such as Roman and World War 1 defences, often with a local emphasis, but also the First World War, the Second World War, and the Iron Age. The summer outings have included visits to sites in the Eden Valley, Norfolk and Slovakia. The summer outings have included visits to sites in the Eden Valley, Norfolk and Slovakia. The summer outings have included visits to sites in the Eden Valley, Norfolk and Slovakia. The summer outings have included visits to sites in the Eden Valley, Norfolk and Slovakia.

Two talks have been given by the group, the first in 2005 on the *Romans in Eden* and the second in 2006 on the *Iron Age in the Eden Valley*. The first talk was given at the National Archaeology Day in 2005 and the second at the National Archaeology Day in 2006. Both talks have stimulated interest from the local media and the group has been invited to give talks at other events.

The group's aims have been met but it will be the membership and the



Threlkeld Quarry

At their November meeting, members enjoyed Donald Angus' informative and entertaining talk about Threlkeld Quarry. Mr Angus has a long family association with the quarry and now spends much of his time working there in a voluntary capacity.

He spoke briefly about the geology of the Lake District and the Eden Valley and its contribution to wealth creation. For centuries granite, slate, sandstone and limestone have been used for building. Before the railways, when the transport of stone was difficult, people used local stone as can be seen from the use of sandstone in Appleby and of granite and slate in Keswick.

Four thousand years ago stone was taken from the fells to make tools and later the Romans made full use of local stone in their buildings. There is evidence of monks obtaining slate from Honiston and sandstone, which is easily worked, was used to build the 12th century abbeys at Shap and Furness. The remains of lime kilns provide archaeological evidence of the wide use of

lime as a fertiliser and many buildings demonstrate its use as plaster. Prior to mechanisation, in the nineteenth century stone was cleared by hand.

The quarry at Threlkeld was opened in the 1870s, by a Mr Harkewitz. A crushing plant, powered by steam, was set up in a siding on the Cockermouth Keswick and Penrith rail-

placed by a mixture of fertiliser and diesel. Both types of explosive shifted out blocks of rock which were then hand loaded into wagons and taken to the crusher by a narrow gauge cable railway. As the demand for stone increased the railway line was extended to other quarries and to Threlkeld station and the cable was replaced by steam powered locomotion.

By the 1880s the skilled task of making setts, small rectangular paving block used

for road building, was established and continued until 1936. Making the setts was a very skilled task as they were fashioned using only a hammer and designed so that they locked into one another. As this type of granite can not be polished it provided a non slip surface and was used for the steep roads of northern towns.

Concrete tiles were produced at the end of the 19th century and examples of these have



way which had been built in the 1860s. The stone quarried was used by the Manchester Corporation Waterworks for their Thirlmere scheme, for railway ballast on the Crewe-Carlisle railway as well as for road stone and kerbing.

The rock, which is a very hard fine granite, was blasted loose using gunpowder, placed in deep holes drilled at the base of the rock face. Later on the gunpowder was re-

been dug up during recent developments at the site. These floor tiles had beautiful patterns and colours. Their use was not confined to this area and they can be seen in Manchester Town Hall, and they can be found locally in Threlkeld Church and the Conservative Club in Keswick. Manufacture of the tiles was replaced by making paving flags in 1900.

In the 1890s many houses were built, in stone, and these attracted people to work at the quarry and by 1901 one hundred men were employed. Mr Angus' grand parents moved to the area because of the good housing and he remembered visiting them as a child and had recollections of oil lamps and the Saturday morning collection from the earth closets. The houses were not modernised until the 1950s

The men worked in unhealthy and dusty conditions and there was a high incidence of chest conditions such as silicosis. There were also injuries especially to the eyes from chips of stone and Mr Angus recalled having seen many men walking around Threlkeld with black eye patches, a far cry from today's health and safety practices.

The workers, however, were very loyal and if a problem arose would work on until it was solved.

The quarry closed in 1937 and was reopened in 1949 when, as part of a major modernisation, a new crushing plant was set up. By the 1950s the quarry was producing 500 tons of granite chippings a day which were used for ballast, aggregates, tarmac and ready mixed concrete. Unfortunately this plant was so placed that access to the granite became impossible and in 1982 the quarry closed.

The site was then cleared of anything sellable and a number of proposals for its use were put forward. A small business park was built. A Trust was set up in 1992 with the idea of developing a museum and a start was made on landscaping and restoring old buildings. In 1995 the Trust was wound up and the future of the museum was handed over to the current Museum Company who, ten years ago, opened the museum. Everyone involved works in a voluntary capacity and today they continue the work to restore the quarry, its buildings and machinery. The visitor to the site can now travel on a narrow gauge steam railway, enter a mine and admire the working collection of Ruston Bucyrus excavators in addition to enjoying the museum's

geological and historical exhibitions.

The talk concluded with a series of slides illustrating the ongoing work of restoration at the site

In his vote of thanks Harry Hawkins spoke of how yesterday's industry becomes today's archaeology and thanked Mr Angus for his very interesting talk.

Phyllis Rouston

Tracking the Elusive Norsemen

Appleby Archaeology Group welcomed Dr Linda Corrigan of the English Place Name Society to their February Meeting. Dr Corrigan has a special interest in the Anglo Saxon languages and her research has concentrated on the place names of South Cumbria before 1100.

The geographical areas she referred to are the districts that existed before the boundary changes of 1974. The study covered the early place names in what was then the Copeland district of Cumberland, the North Lonsdale ward of Lancashire, South Westmorland and North Westmorland.

Dr Corrigan confined her research to names that had been mentioned in documents before 1100. Her main source was the 1086 Yorkshire Domesday Book, which includes parts of present day Lancashire and Cumbria. In 1086 the English Scottish border was further south than it is today and as a result the northern part of present day Cumbria is not recorded in Domesday.

Seventy pre 1100 documented place names were found and the majority, sixty, were in the south with only seven in Copeland and three in North Westmorland. Thirty three of the names contain an element derived from Old English (OE) and fourteen have elements of Old Norse (ON). Other language that appear are Old French, Gaelic and Britonic an example of the latter being *Derwā* meaning oak and found in the modern name Derwent.

Place name may include personal names for example, in Old English *Alda* and *Leofa* found in Aldingham and Levens, and in Old Norse, *Kilvert* found in Killerwick. The name may also show how the land was used. For example *stīrc* meaning young cattle in Old English gives us Stricland in South Westmorland.

Some elements in the name are generic

and occur frequently. The most common is *tūn* which appears in Old English and in Old Norse as *tún* and means a farmstead or village. Other examples are *hām* (OE) hamlet or homestead and *bj* (ON) farmstead or village.

Many of the names include a component that indicates the topography of the place and these names are thought to be early ones. Thirty-five of the documented names have such a component and the majority of these derive from Old English though many are found in both Old English and Old Norse. Examples include *stān* (OE) or *stein* (ON) meaning stone as found in Stainton in North Lonsdale; *dael* (OE) or *dair* (ON) meaning valley and found in Dalton and Lonsdale. The Old English derivations *graef* meaning grave or pit and *öra* meaning iron occur in the name Orgrave in North Lonsdale.

The research identifies that elements of Old English appear more frequently than elements of Old Norse in place names mentioned in the documents before 1100 and that only a few of these names were in the two northern districts. From the study a picture of the local landscape can be built up as one with farmsteads, valleys, stony areas, clearings (*lēah* OE) and steep slopes (*brekka* ON) with all these features and many others being recorded in the names.

Dr Corrigan concluded by saying that in the 11th century Norsemen moved into the area from Galloway and Ireland and this influx coincides with an increase in Viking names appearing in the 12th and 13th centuries. It is in this period that familiar elements such as *thwaite* and *thorpe* appear.

Phyllis Rouston

Forthcoming Events

Know your Pots - Post Medieval Pottery

7.30 pm : Tuesday 8th April

Jo Dickenson of Green Lane Archaeology will provide pointers to identifying and dating pottery finds

Ninekirks and Hornby Hall

7.00pm : Thursday 15th May

Evening walk and talk by Tony Greenwood, author of a recent publication on Ninekirks. Meet at small car park opposite Whinfell Park on the A66. OS 558 289

Vindolanda

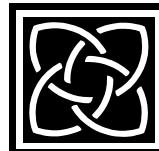
Sunday 15th June

See enclosed booking form

Scordale Mine

2.00pm Sunday 6th July

Afternoon walk led by Frank Giecco. Meet at Town Head, Hilton (at the fell gate). OS 737 207



SENDER:

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